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Nick
Abroad

And Other

Poems



By Horace A. Hutchison

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Yours Truly,
Horace A. Hutchison.

OLD NICK ABROAD

AND OTHER POEMS.

✓
BY HORACE A. HUTCHISON.

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INDEX.

Old Nick Abroad —	Page.
At Church	3
With the Doctor	7
At the Court-House	11
With the Mob	16
He Takes a Walk	25
At the Gospel Tent	36
Found in the Street	79
Day-Dreams	85
De Watermilyun	98
To be Seen of Men	102
Independence Day	105
Waves Follow Waves	108
In Heaven and Earth	112
The Golden Oar	119
The Future	122
Beauty's Tears	124
Our Country	126
Contrast	128
Music	130

OLD NICK ABROAD.

AT CHURCH.

One bright Sunday morning, Old Satan, they say,
Concluded he'd come to the earth that day,
And, if to church he could find the way,
He'd hear some good 'minister preach and pray.
He took out his broadcloth and brushed it well,
Then hung it outside of the gate a spell,
Supposing the breezes that rose and fell
Would cleanse it, perhaps, of its sulphurous smell.

He changed his appearance, as he only can,
And put on the form of a nice young man,
Succeeding so wondrously well in his plan,
That even his intimate friends might scan
His form and his features, and, maybe, his feet—
With shining black garments and gaiters so neat—
Nor know that the Devil they'd chanced to meet,

To hide his bad odor—at least, there is none
Other reason for using perfumery known—
He took his white kerchief, as others have done,
And sprinkled it freely with eau de cologne.
Then, very demurely, he walked up the street,
In search of the place where the good people meet,
And, just as the minister's prayer was complete,
He strode up the broad aisle and took a front seat.

But one thing there was he'd neglected to do,
And that was to sweeten his breath with a chew
Of cardamom seed, or of cloves a few,
And when his foul breath on an urchin he blew,
Who sat just beside him, within the same pew,
The boy said he thought—and it may have been true—
The stranger had swallowed a brimstone stew,
Or Lucifer matches, a handful or two.

He took up a hymn-book, and sung out so loud
That one of the deacons who heard him avowed
There wasn't a singer in all of the crowd
Who might not of such a fine voice be proud.

The ladies looked on him, and seemed to admire
His elegant figure and genteel attire;
But one, when he'd taken his seat very nigh her,
Grew faint, and, evincing an earnest desire
To get farther off from the gentleman by her,
Declared that his eyeballs were nothing but fire.

The parson a chapter of Scripture perused,
Then Satan and sinners most roundly abused,
Yet never Old Nick was a moment confused,
But seemed, for a time, to be only amused;
Yet, when the good preacher had already gone
From firstly to tenthly, and still would go on,
He felt very greatly inclined to yawn.

Then, over the audience he took a sly peep,
And saw there were several fast asleep,
While over some others there seemed to creep
A spirit of weariness, heavy and deep,
And others who scarcely their tempers could keep.

Then, calmly he smiled, as he bowed down his head,
And, in a low voice, to himself, he said:

“The preacher has worn out the long-drawn thread
Of the dull discourse, which he hoped had led
His hearers in virtuous ways to tread,
And, now, all devotional feeling has fled,
And anger and weariness reign in its stead.”

He voted the parson a terrible bore,
And then, in his anger, impatiently swore
That, if the long sermon should ever be o’er,
He would not be found at a church any more;
And, when a good brother began to snore,
He took up his beaver and made for the door.

“It is strange,” he remarked, “that a speaker can’t see
When people are weary as well they can be;
No doubt, a most well-meaning person is he,
But, were I a preacher, it does seem to me,
A sermon like that I would make into three;
But, let him go on, though to me he’s uncivil,
And rounds of abuse at my head he may level,
Such very long sermons are apt to do evil,
And only assist in the plans of the Devil.”

WITH THE DOCTOR.

Then, leisurely strolling the highway along,
Humming the tune to a frivolous song,
He paused in his wanderings, just before
A neat looking house, which, in gold letters, bore
The sign of a doctor upon its broad door,
And, just in a trice, it occurred to Old Nick
That it would, indeed, be a jolly, good trick
To make the physician believe he was sick.

His smile passed away, and then you could trace
A look of great suffering over his face,
As feebly he knocked at the door of the place.
The doctor came out, and, with tenderest care,
Escorted Old Nick to an invalid's chair,
Who told him a story of sufferings rare.

The doctor examined his tongue and his eye—
Found one was inflamed and the other was dry—
And quickly proceeded a goblet to fill
With water, and said: "Sir, take this, if you will."

“Oh, no,” said Old Nick, “it is not in the bill
Of fare I am used to; I fear it would kill,
For even the sight of it gives me a chill.
If I took but a drop from the pure mountain rill,
Its effect upon me, sir, would baffle your skill;
I would much rather swallow your bitterest pill.”

The doctor looked up, with a curious glance,
Suspecting he'd met with a madman, perchance,
But, adjusting his glasses, he quietly said:
“You've a bad breaking out on your face and your head,
Sufficient to warrant your going to bed;
To fatal results such affections have led.”

“Yes, I often break out,” said Old Nick, “and they say
That whenever I do there's the devil to pay.”
And seen in his eye was a mischievous leer;
But the doctor, tho' thinking his patient was queer,
Let never a sign of suspicion appear,
And said, “I conclude from your odor and looks,
You have tried the best remedy known to the books.”
“Oh, yes,” said Old Nick, “that I've certainly done,
For of brimstone I've used up full many a ton;
In fact, on the stuff I have made quite a run.”

The doctor could scarce his impatience conceal,
But said, as the pulse he proceeded to feel,
“Its beatings a very hot fever reveal.”
“Oh, yes,” said Old Nick, “I’m as hot as the de’il;
But then, my dear sir, I am normally so;
I live in a very hot place, you must know,
Away, far away, from the regions of snow.”

The doctor declared that, by every fair rule,
The fellow was more of a knave than a fool,
And said, vainly striving the while to keep cool,
“Say, what is your name, sir, and where do you dwell?”
“Against giving my name,” said Old Nick, “I rebel,
But my country—the name that it goes by is—well—
Hades, of which the New Version will tell;
A land, I assure you, of goodly dimensions,
All paved, one has said, with those human inventions,
Excuses, inlaid with the best of intentions.
We have doctors down there, very learned, I am sure,
Yet wholly unable to kill or to cure,
And the ills that we have we must alway endure.”

And then, with audacity almost sublime,
He said: “I invite you to visit our clime—
Come down, and we’ll have just a hell of a time!”

Then Old Nick laughed aloud till his chair fairly rocked,
And the worthy physician was terribly shocked,
To see that his kindness was thus being mocked.

The doctor a christian gentleman was,
With, alway, the highest respect for the laws,
Yet, righteously angry, when given a cause,
And now, though he struggled, the effort was vain,
His just indignation to longer restrain,
And, suddenly seizing his gold-headed cane,
He threatened the insolent stranger to brain.

“Your manner and language,” he said, “sir, are rude,
And, lest my good stick in your blood be imbrued,
Begone, and no longer upon me intrude!”
And the fellow was hastily forced to conclude
That, if a good beating he wished to elude,
’Twere better that he other quarters should seek;
And out, through the keyhole, he went with a shriek,
Leaving only behind him a sulphurous streak
Of blue-looking flame, and—as well he might be—
A startled and very much puzzled M.D.

AT THE COURT-HOUSE.

He came back to earth, on the very next day,
And into a court-house he wended his way,
Just as an attorney, with very grave face,
Proceeded to argue the points of his case.

A lawyer His Majesty never had seen,
For to his dominions none ever had been,
And he was desirous the reason to know
Why none had been sent to the regions below.

Somehow, 'twas the fault of his agents, he thought,
That none of these lawyers had ever been caught,
And for his own pleasure he felt a desire
To visit the the earth and the reason inquire.

From the talk of the one with the visage so grave,
You'd have thought his opponent a consummate knave,
Or the veriest tyro that ever you saw
Attempt a discussion of points of the law.

But, soon as the speaker had come to a close,
The counsel opposing him quietly 'rose,
And, with argument strong, and an eloquent burst,
Attacked each position assumed by the first.

They showered each other with scintillant sparks,
And even grew personal in their remarks,
And Satan sat listening there, with a smile,
As if he enjoyed the contention, the while.

Each spoke just as if he believed he was right—
Referred to the law-book and argued with might,
And each seemed to show his position so strong
It was hard to determine which of them was wrong.

And, thinking he'd heard quite enough of the fuss,
Old Nick turned away and soliloquized thus:
“If all that they say of each other be true,
The Devil has surely been robbed of his due!

“They seem to have puzzled the court with their cavil,
And I must confess they have puzzled the Devil.
I'm satisfied, now, it is all very well,
For the ones I could get would make trouble in hell.

“In ev’ry profession, ’tis well understood,
Are mingled the wicked, the weak, and the good,
And lawyers, in morals and brains, I’m aware,
With all of the others will average fair;

“For many are able and honest, and such
I never can hope to get into my clutch,
And with ignorant shysters, my agents well knew,
The Devil himself would have nothing to do.

“There are some, whom my agents permitted to pass,
Who make up a wicked and dangerous class,
Who, having no conscience, though plenty of brain,
Would scruple at nothing that promises gain.

“As ev’ry one knows, ’tis their greatest delight
Discord to engender when fees are in sight.
With these, I’d soon have an ejectment on hand,
In which not a chance of success I would stand.

“My agents were right to let all such alone;
I might, if I had them, be robbed of my throne!”
The last words he uttered were spoken aloud,
Disturbing the court and attracting the crowd.

“The sheriff,” the judge said, “will cause to report
The person or persons disturbing the court.”
The sheriff came forward Old Nick to arrest,
And against the offender a fine was assessed.

And then, in a manner defiantly bold,
He took from his pocket some pieces of gold,
And handed them over the desk to the clerk,
Who threw them aside, with a violent jerk,

But retained on each finger a big, blistered spot,
For the money, tho’ glittering gold, was red-hot.
The clerk took the matter with very bad grace,
But the wily Old Nick only laughed in his face.

The judge told the sheriff to take him to jail,
Ten days in a cell to be kept, without bail,
And the sheriff came up and took hold of his arm,
But the dungeon for Satan had never a charm,

And he vaulted clear over the officer’s head,
Knocked down a big deputy sheriff, and fled,
Pursued to the door, where, on looking around,
No trace of the fugitive culprit was found.

So strangely the villain had vanished from sight,
The hair of the sheriff stood up in affright,
And, though of great courage he truly could boast,
His face was as colorless, now, as a ghost.

The deputy's eye was "as black as your hat"—
The court in a state of astonishment sat—
The lawyers and witnesses, all, were amazed,
And the sheriff, poor fellow, was utterly dazed.

He returned to the court-room, in terrible shape,
Reported, in tremulous voice, the escape,
And, touching the Bible that lay on a shelf,
Made oath that the fellow had swallowed himself.

WITH THE MOB.

Again he was visible, just about noon,
When making his way to a handsome saloon,
Just after the owner thereof had stepped out
To get him a lunch, leaving no one about
Except a young "colored" man 'tending the bar.
Old Nick sauntered in and procured a cigar.
"Now, boss," said the man, "help yourself to a match"—
Not dreaming that he was addressing Old Scratch.
"O, no," said Old Nick, "no such thing I require—
I'm alway provided with plenty of fire."

He took from his pocket what really seemed
A live coal of fire, so brightly it gleamed,
And touched his cigar and proceeded to smoke,
As he turned to observe the effect of his joke.
The "weed" was ablaze, to the darkey's surprise,
As well could be seen, for the white of his eyes
Seemed to spread, in a moment, half over his face,
And his ebony hue to an ashen gave place.
He quietly inched toward the end of the bar,
Near which the side-door of the place stood ajar.

“Please ’scuse me,” he said, as he earnestly tried
To be calm, “’cause I done got some business outside.”
And then, just before his departure he took,
Turning ’round, at the stranger to have a sly look,
He saw a dark column of smoke that arose
From the end of the singular gentleman’s nose,
While out of his mouth shot a stream of red flame,
And sparks, when he winked, thro’ his eyelashes came.
“Oh, Lawd!” said the darkey, and rushed out the door,
Running over a dog that was stretched on the floor,
And went down the street as if shot from a gun,
And the dog, barking angrily, joined in the run.
Then, children and others, observing the race,
From alley and avenue, entered the chase,
And twenty policemen, at least, coming in
With whistles and “stop thief!” augmented the din,
And the barking of dogs and the yelling of boys
And the shouting of men added much to the noise.
The women came forth from each dwelling-house nigh,
To watch the wild crowd as it went rushing by,
And some one gave vent to the terrible cry
Of “fire!” and three engines came rumbling along,
With clanging of bell and the sounding of gong.

Tho' mounted policemen had followed with speed,
The dog and the darkey kept far in the lead,
Till, reaching his cabin, he rushed thro' the door,
And, almost exhausted, fell down on the floor,
And crawled to a corner, where, under the bed,
As if for concealment, he covered his head.

A policeman entered, with club and with gun,
Supposing some horrible crime had been done.
He dragged the poor fellow from under the bed,
Who, after an interval, tremblingly said
He surely had caught of the Devil a glimpse,
And been chased by Old Nick and a legion of imps.
The officer, hearing this, thought it was plain
The man he had captured was drunk, or insane.
He was greatly chagrined, and a little profane,
To find that his efforts were labor in vain,
And resolved that the matter should secret remain;
For an officer thinks it almost a disgrace
If he fails in attempting to make up a case;
And so the good folk of the town never knew
What it was that had caused such a fearful ado,

Reflecting how often much trouble may spring
From some very foolish or trivial thing,
Old Nick, with a gratified look on his face,
Had been an observer of all that took place,
And seemed to be happy to witness the evil
Resulting from one little trick of the Devil.

“The Devil,” he said, “like a mortal, may do
An act, in itself, very small, it is true,
Which may, if it chance to be not understood,
Result in great wrong, or accomplish much good;
A thrust may be deadly, tho’ given in sport,
A character ruined by thoughtless report,
And even the act of a timorous man,
If not comprehended by witnesses, can
The mob to such terrible madness excite,
That it seems to do horrible things with delight.

“One half of the town into frenzy is thrown,
Yet the cause of it all is to me only known,
And if one single person in all the vast throng
Should accuse the best man in the town of a wrong,
Crying “hang him!” I, really, have not a doubt,
That the wicked suggestion would be carried out.”

“I think I will try it,” and rushing away
To the midst of the throng, proceeded to say,
From a box that he stood on, in voice very loud,
Which was heard by the most, if not all, of the crowd,
“A crime has been done—a foul murder committed
And the villain who did it should not be permitted
To make his escape! He is here—there he stands—
There is blood on his clothing and blood on his hands!”
He waved his right hand toward a gentleman, known
As a citizen worthy as any in town,
Whom the wily old Devil, in coming, had passed
And over him some kind of coloring cast,
Unknown to the victim, thus leaving a stain,
Which had the appearance of blood, to remain.

“Hang him up!” cried Old Nick, “he’s a murderer, red
With the blood of his victim, so cruelly shed!”
The man pointed out, although guiltless of crime,
Astonished and startled, turned pale at the time,
As many an innocent man had before,
When some fearful crime had been laid at his door.
Old Satan, at once, with a lawyer-like tact,
Noted what, he declared, was a damaging fact:
“Just see how he pales,” he said, “showing his guilt,

And the fear he will swing for the blood he has spilt!
Come on, and we'll make an example of him,
As soon as we find a good lamp-post or limb!"

The crowd made a rush for the man, and, in vain,
He offered a protest and tried to explain.

They dragged him away to a neighboring post—
Old Nick, with a rope, at the head of the host—
And tying the end of the cord to a stone,
Which over the lamp-post was skillfully thrown,
With loud imprecations and cruel abuse,
To the neck of the man they adjusted the noose.

Old Nick, at that moment, called out to the crowd
That the man was not guilty, and freely avowed
That he was the murderer—that he had lied—
And the worst they could do him he boldly defied.
He, purposely, gave the affair such a shape,
Well knowing that he would their fury escape.

"Well, then," one exclaimed, "after what you have
said,

It is nothing but right you should suffer, instead
Of the one you have slandered," and over his head—

After turning the innocent gentleman loose—
In no gentle manner, they brought down the noose.
Each one appeared willing assistance to lend,
And a dozen laid hold of the rope's other end,
And Old Nick was soon dangling high up in the air;
But, as he went upward, seized one by the hair,
And took him along, and then twirled him around,
Till the scalp-lock gave way, and he fell to the ground.
The man was not hurt—as the fall was not far—
But it gave him a fright and a terrible jar,
And the volatile crowd thought it excellent fun,
To see him get up and start off on the run,
With his eyes bulging out, and his hair all astand,
Save a bunch which Old Nick waved aloft in his hand.

The men appeared changed, after seeing this feat,
And, concluding that he was some crazy athlete,
Who had come with the “show” that was doing the
town,
They loosened their hold, and Old Nick was let down;
But when one approached him, the noose to displace,
Old Nick blew a shower of sparks in his face;
And then, as the crowd started back in affright,
With a burst of wild laughter, he vanished from sight.

Some causes of action, much serious strife,
Some enmities made that will linger thro' life,
A half-dozen fights among roughs in the crowd,
A pistol-shot, now and then, ringing aloud,
A carriage upset, with a woman and child,
A few badly injured, by teams running wild,
Two engines colliding, with terrible clash,
Some transfers of watches and stealing of cash,
A gentleman's life nearly taken away,
Were part of the incidents marking the day—
And all on account of a trivial trick,
Conceived in the mischievous brain of Old Nick.

HE TAKES A WALK.

That afternoon he went out thro' the fields,
Where Nature unto man its bounty yields,
To see if he could other 'venture find,
Or scenes to interest his active mind.
He took with him a heavy, oaken cane,
And, as he passed along a dusty lane,
An hour, perhaps, before the close of day,
He saw, approaching him, upon the way,
What seemed to him a tiller of the soil,
Returning slowly from his daily toil,
With shining scythe across his shoulder flung—
The blade so long almost to earth it hung.

Straight forward, toward Old Nick, the creature came,
As odd a looking thing as you could name.
Its cranium was absolutely bare,
Save for one tangled lock of whitest hair;
No sign of flesh upon its form was seen,
And holes were where its optics should have been.

“Out of my way!” the creature fiercely said,
“Or I’ll bring down this blade upon your head!”
To which Old Nick replied: “I never yet,
On earth, an object that I feared have met,
And, while to strike as old a man as you
Would be a most unseemly thing to do,
Still, if you try to bar my way, I’ll brain
You, like a dog, with this good, oaken cane!”

Then, with a crash, the gleaming scythe came down,
Like flash of lightning on the Devil’s crown,
Just as the latter’s stick swept thro’ the air
And landed on the other’s temple bare.
Altho’ the blade rung like a mighty bell,
As down upon Old Nick’s hard head it fell,
And tho’ his very tough and heavy cane
Was in the effort almost split in twain,
Yet neither blow appeared to show effect,
Except that Old Nick’s hat was badly wrecked.
Upon each other silently they gazed,
As if they were, at such result, amazed.
The one, on looking at his weapon, learned,
To his surprise, the edge was slightly turned;

And Satan saw, with wonder, that his stick
Was greatly damaged by his savage lick.

Each, for a time, the other fiercely eyed,
As if he his antagonist defied;
Then both, at once, their weapons cast aside,
And at each other, as mad beasts would go,
They rushed, exchanging blow for blow,
Which neither of them seemed at all to feel,
For both appeared as tough as tempered steel,
And not a scratch was made, nor blood was drawn,
By all their blows so heartily laid on,
Tho' ev'ry stroke awoke a fearful sound,
As when a thunderbolt falls on the ground.

Again they stood apart, as if each thought
Some very strange antagonist he'd caught;
A moment stood they, gazing, face to face,
Then came together in a strong embrace,
As wrestlers do, and strove, with might and main,
Each o'er the other, to some vantage gain;
But finding soon that such attempts were vain,
They went into a "rough and tumble" fight,
With kick and cuff and scratch and brutal bite.

Old Nick his thumb thrust in the other's eye.
Supposing he would thus extort a cry
Of pain, but only heard a wild defy!
The other tried to bite off Satan's nose—
Each, all the time, still giving vengeful blows.

Thus did they strive and strike and scratch,
Till they concluded 'twas an even match,
And that each one possessed some potent charm,
Completely shielding him from ev'ry harm;
For, tho' they had, while struggling o'er the ground,
Torn up the turf a full half-acre 'round,
On neither, blood, nor scratch, nor bruise was found.
They then, by seeming mutual consent,
Released their holds, as if they were content
To give the struggle over. By each other
They sat them down, as brother by a brother.

Old Satan, feeling much inclined to seek
Some knowledge of the man, or fiend, or freak,
The stranger into conversation led.
“I'd like to know just what you are,” he said.
The answer was: “I am the firstborn son
Of Old Eternity. Since it begun

Upon its new-made axis to revolve,
I've seen the things of earth, like mist, dissolve;
I stood upon the water's vasty verge,
And listened to the ocean's first wild surge;
I saw the sun and moon hung out on high,
And watched the stars' first glimmer in the sky;
When Heaven's first-created human pair
In Eden wandered, I, with them, was there;
I breathe upon the earth, in smiling spring,
And from its bosom fruits and flowers bring;
I wander over ev'ry hill and plain,
And mark the days to sow and reap the grain;
I touch the leaf, and all its beauty dies—
The vine, and, at my feet, it withered lies.

“I tread the mountain's gleaming crest of snow,
And linger in the valley's sunset glow;
I walk the lonely beach, where sea-birds flock,
And spread my cold, gray mantle o'er the rock;
I stand beside the couch, when man is born,
And go with him till he from life is torn;
I plant the dimple on the infant's face,
Where sorrow, afterward, its lines may trace;

To give the flush which beauty loves to wear,
I bring, to youth, red roses, fresh and fair,
And watch them as they fade with age and care;
The snowy tinge to locks of men I lend,
And pile on them the years, 'neath which they bend,
And when they're called away, by voice divine,
I cut them down with this good blade of mine."

Old Nick heard all of this, with wond'ring look,
And for a lunatic the other took,
And, turning to him, said: "If all the same
To you, 'twould please me if I knew your name."
The answer was: "I'm known in ev'ry clime,
And, on the earth, I'm called Old Father Time."

At this the Devil opened wide his eyes—
For 'twas to him a genuine surprise—
And he remarked that, now, it was explained
Why neither, in their fight, advantage gained.
"It is but fair," he said, "to give my name—
Which, I may say, is not unknown to fame;
By some, I have been called the Prince of Evil,
And, at your service, sir, I am the Devil.
If you, indeed, be old as earth and sea,

Then, truly, you are somewhat elderly;
But, granting that 'tis true, I still deny
That you can any older be than I,
For 'tis the simple, honest truth I tell,
When I declare that I'm as old as hell.

“With you, I saw the far, blue sky unfurled,
Like some great, starlit sea, above the world;
I, too, in Eden, met creation's pride,
The fairest thing on earth—the new-made bride.
I saw her first, when, on a mossy bank,
Where lilies to the waters bent and drank,
She sat beside a shining, crystal pool,
O'er which the flow'ring trees flung shadows cool,
While, stealing thro' a gently-waving bough,
A gleam of sunshine fell upon her brow,
And, I confess, I sighed to be one ray,
To kiss that brow, and not be spurned away.
Around her neck, fanned by the fragrant air,
Hung, like a golden mist, her silken hair,
And, from the tree, a bird of brilliant wing
Came down, to perch upon her hand and sing.
A lion, in whose eye I could discern

The slumb'ring fire, some day, with rage to burn,
With tread majestic, from the wood, drew near,
But the great beast she did not seem to fear,
For when, to drink from out the pool, it stayed,
Her hand upon its tawny mane she laid.

There was no sense of fear, no thought of harm,
Where perfect innocence lent all a charm;
Yet, even there, in earth's first, sinless hours,
The Tempter lurked, concealed amid the flowers,
And, soon, by wicked wiles, as men are taught,
Upon the world the wrath of Heaven brought.

“ ’Twas after lovely woman disobeyed
The stern injunction the Creator laid,
That over all things came a fearful change,
Which, even unto me, seemed wondrous strange;
'Twas after that the wild beast learned to howl,
And forth, in search of prey, began to prowl;
The very air seemed then to restive grow,
And with unwonted violence to blow,
And, as the night came on, a cloud appeared,
And lightning flashed and thunder's voice was heard,
And the first storm that happy Eden knew

Swept in its wrath the blooming garden through.
'Twas after that, grief on the earth was known,
And seeds of dread disease and death were sown,—
Those evils which, in ev'ry after-age,
Have been to man a fearful heritage;
'Twas then, Old Time, the Master gave to you
Commission your destructive work to do.

“Then, other things, of less import, had birth,
That are familiar, still, upon the earth.
Then, first, I heard, in tones of deep despair,
The words: ‘I’ve nothing in the world to wear!’
And, then, as if by some new thought inspired,
The woman to a grove, near by, retired,
Returning, after but a brief delay,
In garb decidedly décolleté—
A style which, though 'tis greatly modified,
Has not been, yet, entirely, put aside.

“Although, till then, she seemed to be content
To go without a single ornament,
She gathered flowers, now, her hair to deck
And wove bright garlands for her snowy neck;

Now, too, she seemed to have grown shy,
And shunned the wild beast, if it came too nigh;
But her first scream of anguish and dismay
Was uttered when a mouse came in her way;
And many minor traits, of hers, 'tis said,
By her fair daughters were inherited,
While all the base instincts with men that bide,
Originated on the father's side;
For, certainly, no good from him e'er came,
Who did, to shield himself, the woman blame.

"You deal with things that perish here, while I
Am most concerned with things that never die.
We both beheld the great Creator's hand
Bring into shape the sea, the sky, the land,
But I beside the wreck of worlds will stand,
And then and there your funeral attend,
While I go on my course that ne'er will end."

"I took you for a man," Old Time replied,
"And, when you boldly my request denied,
I thought, with ease, to strike you from my way,
As I my many thousands do each day;
But, when my shining, alway trusted blade,

Upon you not the least impression made,
I knew not what to think, for ne'er, till now,
My weapon failed upon the hardest brow.
No harm is done, though, and I'm glad we met—
Though much our way of meeting I regret."

Old Satan—alway cunning, sometimes wise—
Began, as oft he does, to moralize;
He said: "We two have acted just like men;
We took on us the human shape, and then
Fell into human ways. If you and I
Had not been rash, there is no reason why
We should have joined in any such affray,
Or met as other 'than good friends to-day;
But, I, in search of any kind of sport,
Was very swift to useless trouble court;
And you, in ignorance of who I was,
To make investigation did not pause,
And we concluded, in our foolish pride,
That one must for the other stand aside.
Thus, often, men, and even nations do;
One takes of some small thing a wrongful view—
A point of etiquette, perhaps—and then they go
To war, and blood and treasures freely flow,

With all destruction's direst means employed,
Till one or both may be destroyed,
When, had they circumstances understood,
They might have each worked for the other's good."

Upon examining Old Time's good blade,
He saw a dent upon the edge was made,
Which was, the Devil humorously said,
Caused by its contact with his own hard head;
And, drawing it a few times o'er the boot
That covered and disguised his cloven foot,
Removed the dent, and gave to it as keen
And smooth an edge as ever yet was seen,
And to the owner, watching him, the while,
Returned the weapon, with a pleasant smile.
Old Time, as if appreciating that,
Took up the Devil's badly battered hat,
Mended the cut, and smoothed the wrinkles, too,
Till it appeared to be as good as new,
And passed it over to His Majesty,
Both bowing, with grotesque civility,
As each confessed the other's courtesy.
Then, Father Time resumed his onward flight,
And Satan disappeared again from sight.

AT THE GOSPEL TENT.

Old Nick remained carefully hidden from view,
Till the stars had appeared on the face of the blue,
When he came out again, for a stroll on the street,
And heard, in the distance, some music, so sweet,
That, in search of the place whence it sounded, he went,
And soon had arrived at a very large tent,
Where many good people together he found,
Some sitting on benches and some on the ground.

He stood, a few minutes, and then, crowding in,
Took a seat by the man with the violin,
Who just had ceased playing, and when, pretty soon,
He started a beautiful, rallying tune,
So lively — tho', still, an appropriate air —
That it seemed to give spirit to ev'ry one there,
Old Satan was led, to himself, to declare
That he the enchantment, distinctly, could feel,
For it tickled his foot from his toe to his heel.

“These people are wise,” he remarked, “thus to bring
To their christian meeting so charming a thing

To draw in the careless, for, once coming near
Such a meeting as this, they may happen to hear
Some word that may make an impression for good;
I cannot conceive how a man ever could
Have thought that the sound of the sweet violin
Should only be heard amid frolic and sin."

When he found he had come to a "salvation meeting,"
At first, he was just on the point of retreating—
Rememb'ring that he had once taken a vow
That he would not again attend preaching—but, now,
When ev'ry one there was invited to speak,
He thought that he would opportunity seek
To say a few words; and the leader came by,
Just then, and, on looking around, caught the eye
Of the stranger, and, seeing the shiny, silk hat,
Which he held in his hand, and his snowy cravat,
And observing his clerical bearing, he thought
Him a minister, and that he, probably, ought
To invite him to speak, and he, therefore, approached
Old Nick, and the subject he quietly broached.
Old Satan remarked that he did not expect
Such an honor, but, really, could not reject

The kind invitation. The leader inquired
The name of the gentleman whom he desired
To present, as a speaker, before the big crowd.
As if very modest, Old Satan avowed
That 'twas useless to name him; but said, "if you will,
You may just introduce me as Mr. DeVil."

The music was stopped, by a wave of the hand,
As the leader escorted Old Nick to the stand.
Then, over the audience fell a deep hush,
As the stranger stood up and pretended to blush,
While the leader remarked that, tho' not in the bill,
He now would present to them Mr. DeVil.
Old Satan came forward and gracefully bowed,
Then, with unseemly levity, laughed out aloud.
The audience, indignant, arose to its feet,
As if it would fain from his presence retreat.
He insisted that each should remain in his seat,
But many, regarding the altar profaned,
Went out, with the leader, tho' numbers remained.
He declared he was glad that the others were gone,
And his conduct, he said, he'd explain further on;
And then he proceeded, with more or less force,
To give them, as follows, a lengthy discourse:

“FIRSTLY.

“I went to hear a good man preach, one day,
 Who talked so long that all who heard were tired,
 And I was led, most wickedly, to say
 That to a church I nevermore desired,
 In daytime or at night, to make my way;
 But things about your meeting I’ve admired,
 And, very much to my astonishment,
 I’m here, and talking, in a ‘Gospel Tent.’

“I do intend to speak the truth to you,
 And yet, you’ll not believe, because you all
 Prefer a lie that’s sweet, to what is true,
 But bitter. First, I wish your thoughts to call
 To one remark his humble spirit drew
 From the renowned apostle, great St. Paul,
 The truth of which he would attempt, in vain,
 If he were here before you, to maintain.

“Declared he, ‘I the chief of sinners am!’
 But surely he forgot, when saying this,
 That there was one who had an older claim
 To such distinction; and, if not amiss,

I will, in this connection, give his name,
Who never yet has known a moment's bliss —
The one who, I can truly say, has been,
Throughout all time, the great high-priest of sin!

“I'm speaking of the Devil, whom you see
Before you now. I know you won't believe
My words, when I assert that I am he;
Yet, often, friends, appearances deceive —
For fairest forms may greatest villains be.
Perhaps, before my presence you shall leave,
You'll be convinced that what I'm telling you
About myself, beyond a doubt, is true.

“That worthy sister, over there, commends
What I have said, as only evidence
Of great humility, nor credence lends
My claim that I'm Old Nick, and that I hence
Will soon return to where the Master sends
The wicked, to receive their recompense;
And yet, instead of being humble, I,
As Lucifer, the proud, the very gods defy!

“As some of you may be, I’m full of pride;
 And one of the dread features of my fate
 Is that my feelings must be mortified
 By my compulsion to associate
 With small souls that — their bodies having died —
 Are sent to me. Such little things I hate
 To mingle with; yet, thus, compelled to serve,
 Am I, the end the Master would observe.

“Then, there are other souls, so very mean—
 Perhaps, like some of those before me now—
 That of their company the Devil, e’en,
 Ashamed doth feel; and here I do avow,
 That with such horrid creatures to be seen,
 Would raise a blush upon Old Satan’s brow,
 And he most keenly feels such punishment,
 Upon him, by the great Creator, sent.

“The hell was made to keep the Wicked One;
 But, when the hand of God created man,
 Who, of his own free will, to sin begun,
 The great Creator had to change the plan,

And make more room down there, so those who run
The downward road to dark perdition can
Accommodation find; and, thus, you see,
The Devil has much wicked company.

“I could have borne it better, if, alone,
I'd been condemned to dwell in some drear place,
Off, into utter, outer darkness thrown,
To wander, solitary, in broad space,
Than, as it is, to sit upon my throne,
Surrounded by so many who can trace
Their downfall to such dreadful deeds of evil,
That contemplation of them shocks the Devil.

“Another way in which I serve the Lord
Is, that some men are better than they would
Be, if they did not to me, always, accord
Such fearful attributes. They are not good,
But, still, are better, since the Holy Word
Of God has made it clearly understood
That Satan for the wicked spreads his net,
And will the unrepentant surely get.

“These join a church, alone, thro’ abject fear
Of Satan—not because the Lord they love—
And some of them to others may appear
As innocent of harm as cooing dove;
Yet, they may never ‘read their titles clear’
To mansions in the happy realms above;
They now are near to heaven as e’er they’ll be—
Unless they change—throughout eternity.

“Some others join a church, with selfish aims—
Hoping the members, all, with them will deal;
Some do, because the act, itself, proclaims
They are not, then, supposed to cheat or steal;
Some, as a step toward winning honored names;
And all of this inures to others’ weal,
Because, to hide their base hypocrisy,
They’re not such rascals as they else would be.

“Thus, does the church some evil men restrain,
And, we are told, it should not cast them out.
The tares, you know, must with the wheat remain,
Until the time of harvest come about,

Lest, in destroying them, you harm the grain;
And, yet, the false in church has caused more doubt
Of holy purity, and doctrine true,
Than all outspoken infidels could do.

“Men say they will not come into the fold,
Because the hypocrite there finds a place;
But reason, such as this, would never hold,
A moment, good, in any given case;
As well might they reject all forms of gold,
Because base metal they, in some, can trace;
As well reject the products of the tree,
Because some worthless fruitage they can see.

“Then, too, you know, deceitful men abound
Outside the church. In fact, you'll find it true
That where one hypocrite in church is found,
You can, outside its pale, at least, find two—
Just taking them in equal numbers round.

What, then, will those who shun the churches do?
They fear contamination there, yet see
There is, outside the church, worse company.

“The churches are but hospitals, wherein
The Great Physician ever welcomes all
Who come afflicted with the curse of sin;
Tho’ some, e’en there, do not escape its thrall,
Yet, happy millions, thro’ such mean, have been
Restored, by kindly care, and loving call
To duty, and the pearly fountain pure,
Whose waters, only, can the sin-sick cure.

“The ministers are stewards, unto whom
God gives in charge this open refuge, where
The erring are invited, all, to come,
And where the strong are told that they must bear
Infirmities of others, and assume,
O’er ‘babes in Christ’, a tender, watchful care.
The good of all, the faithful stewards seek,
And, with the christians strong, sustain the weak.

“Tho’, now and then, a priest or preacher may
His sacred robe with some transgression stain,
Yet, where there’s one of them that goes astray,
Ten thousand of them true to God remain,

Devoting earnest lives to good, alway,
And laboring from evil to restrain
Their fellow-men; then do not judge them all
By one, among ten thousand, who may fall.

“You oft complain of what they say, or do,
In loving kindness, only, for your good;
And yet 'tis doubtful if you ever knew
One, from the pulpit, to denounce what would,
If left undone, result in harm to you,
And, tho' you don't agree with them, you should
Reflect that things which they would fain repress
Are not essential to your happiness.

“If he who has been called of God to tell
You of the beauty and the truth of sacred things—
Tho' lowly be his lot, on earth—but well
And faithfully the happy message brings,
Which should the clouds of doubt and fear dispel,
Then, not the mightiest of earthly kings—
Tho' good, as well as great, such monarch be—
Will wear, in heav'n, a brighter crown than he.

“SECONDLY.

“You say you cannot comprehend the things
 Not taught by nature — your most trusted guide —
 Nor understand wherefore the King of Kings
 Sent down to earth His only Son, who died
 That he who to the cross, in faith, still clings,
 Bathed in the flow from out His wounded side,
 Might live again, thro’ blood and sacrifice,
 Within the ransomed spirit’s paradise?

“But neither do you know why death should be,
 That mortal life should be in you sustained.
 That you may live, on ev’ry hand you see
 With blood of innocence the shambles stained,
 And you to slay the harmless brute are free;
 And, if the hand of death is not restrained
 From such gross sacrifice, that man may live
 This life, you well may reason that to give

“The higher life, and human souls to save,
 Some greater, purer, nobler sacrifice
 Was needed than, alone, the earth e’er gave.
 If death of things that perish be the price

Of mortal life, this side the open grave,
Then you may well suppose that to suffice
For life beyond, a being from on high
Must come, for you to suffer, bleed, and die.

“If I could bring you proofs, but half as strong
As show the Savior died and ’rose from death,
To show the Devil died, and hell was, long
Ago, forever, closed, you’d shout your breath
Almost away, with joy; and in this throng
Are many who would rest content, beneath
The baleful shadow of the honeyed lie,
And be no longer, then, afraid to die.

“The spirit’s immortality, some doubt,
And hope that all things have an ending here,
And yet, such thoughts should all be driven out
Of mind, by knowledge of the haunting fear
Of future ills, which hangs each life about;
For, if there be no future, it is clear
That God has to deluded creatures given
False fears of hell and groundless hopes of heaven,

“Some do not in the Miracles believe,
 Because they’re out of nature’s course, they say,
 Yet, not the doubts of such it would relieve,
 If they could see a miracle each day;
 For they would, then, such frequent things receive
 As only part of nature’s grand display.
 If such would, now, read nature’s face aright,
 They would not need to look for clearer light.

“When John the Baptist came, not drinking wine,
 Nor eating bread, he had a devil, people said;
 And when the Nazarene—the Lord Divine—
 Came, drinking and partaking of the bread,
 ‘A winebibber and glutton,’ by that sign,
 They cried, with maledictions on His head.
 Thus, inconsistent man is prone to see
 Whatever is, as he would have it be.

“‘The things invisible are understood
 By things that He has made.’ I do not quote
 The words exact, but if you would
 Of things you see, and ways of men, make note

And study well—if Paul is right—you could
The unseen comprehend, and the remote
Would plainer seem; for you, who nature and
Your reason follow, then, would understand.

“But then, you say, that God is always good,
And reason, unto which you humbly bow,
Doth lead you to believe He never would
The spirit of His creature, man, allow
Into eternal grief to go, nor could
He, being just, write on a human brow
The words: ‘Condemned to everlasting woe!’
For e’en the blackest sin His creatures know.

“Yes, God is good; and yet, you see the earth
Is full of suffering, and sorrow deep;
The things to which creative power gave birth
Are racked and bowed with pain, and man must
weep
Beneath his weight of woe, and all of mirth
The chilling winds of grief away may sweep.
Yes, God is good; yet, ne’er a life He gave
That goeth not thro’ sorrow to the grave.

“And, being good, and thus permitting pain
 And grief to rack the body and the mind,
 And death to lay upon the throbbing vein
 Its icy hand, until, at last, we find
 The once strong pulse and active brain
 Are still and cold, and eyes once bright are blind
 To all the beauties that to earth are known—
 The spirit from the lifeless body flown—

“May we not reason that He may, as well,
 Allow still greater, longer suffering,
 Within the world to come, wherein will dwell
 The disembodied souls of those who cling
 To earthly idols till the gates of hell
 Close after them—they having failed to bring,
 Thro’ death’s dark way, the magic word ‘forgiven,’
 Which would have opened all the doors of heaven?

“If it be cruel, thro’ eternity
 To suffering allow, ’tis cruel to
 Inflict it, even in a less degree,
 Or for a time; yet, men the latter do,

And He who dealeth in infinity,
As well, can punish the transgressor, through
Unending years, of cruelty as free
As man, who deals with finite things, can be.

“Some preachers do not feel inclined to tell
Of things of greatest interest to you;
They ought to speak of the eternal hell,
And picture it in all its colors true,
Because some men, who think that all is well,
And, carelessly, a wayward course pursue,
To deeper thought might be impelled thereby,
And shun the evil that beyond doth lie.

“But for the penalties your laws provide,
To hold in check the, too oft, reckless hand,
More evil would be found on ev’ry side,
And crime would riot run throughout the land.
The punishment that may a man betide,
If he refuses by the law to stand,
Will make him think, perhaps, and, for all time,
May keep him from committing any crime.

“Yes, God is good, altho’, to you, His ways
 May seem inscrutable. Tho’ wars may kill,
 And pestilence its scores of thousands slays,
 And each revolving year new graves may fill—
 Tho’ childhood suffers and old age decays,
 And, after death, the soul must suffer still—
 Altho’ His ways be never understood,
 Each one of you believes that God is good.

“He points you to the path that leads to heaven,
 And warns you of the way that leads to hell,
 And freest choice to you is given,
 And you determine where your souls will dwell
 Thro’ vast eternity. No soul is driven
 To enter either place, and ’tis forever well
 With him, indeed, who in his choice is wise,
 And takes the way that leads him to the skies.

“But do not think that you can ever find
 The haven, without effort; for you would
 As well suppose it was designed
 That on this earth you, without labor, could

Exist, and, without effort of the mind,

Or body, have the all of earthly good,
As hope to reach the place of lasting bliss,
Without a struggle to assure you this.

“God sends to you the sunshine and the rain,
And elements within the earth that sleep,
But these are all bestowed on you in vain,
If you neglect to plow and sow and reap;
So, gives He ev’rything you need to gain
Eternal joys, but you must ever keep
In mind the fact that there is work to do,
Neglecting which, there is no heav’n for you.

“The Soldiers of the Cross bear many names,
And it is well, no doubt, that this is so,
Provided each denomination aims
To reach a common point, tho’ they may go
By ways divergent, and tho’ each one claims
That ’tis the route it travels, here below,
That safest is, for going toward the skies,
Because of some strong point that on it lies.

“Some take, with confidence, the water route,
And some the sprinkled way, where showers fall;
Some travel on with loud amen and shout;
Some, singing psalms, come at the Captain’s call,
And some, with deep-toned organ pealing out;
But if, in front, and followed by them all,
The Banner of the Cross is kept in view,
They’ll meet, at last, in one great rendezvous.

“THIRDLY.

“This thing of punishment began, I grieve
To say, when I was sent away to hell;
And, next, was practiced when your mother, Eve,
Into the way of robbing orchards fell,
And then persuaded Adam to receive
The stolen fruit—as he did basely tell—
And he, for thus receiving stolen goods,
And she, for stealing, had to ‘take the woods.’

“Excuse me, if I seem inclined to joke
On subjects which are serious, at best,
For solemn truth oft lurks beneath the cloak
Of lightest laughter, or of merry jest,

Which some of you, sometimes, no doubt, invoke,
To hide the sorrows of a heart oppress;
And, tho' I speak in light, sarcastic way,
Some fearful truths are found in what I say.

“The just and tender-hearted judge may weep,
While he pronounces sentence on the man
Who failed within the pale of law to keep,
And yet may order that the little span
Of life shall be cut short, or to the deep,
Dark, solitary dungeon prison, can
The culprit doom, shut out from light of day,
Until his wretched life shall pass away.

“And you applaud the act, and say 'tis right,
Because the one condemned the law did break,
Of his free will; that, too, in all the light
That could be thrown around his way, to make
A knowledge of his duty clear and bright,
And show the consequences he must take
Who violates imperfect laws that men
Enact, to foster good and wrong restrain.

“If, thus, may finite man be justified
 In dealing out such fearful punishment,
 Then, surely, boasting reason, in its pride,
 Should never, for a moment, be content,
 To teach that He, whose law should be the guide,
 Could not be just and loving, and consent
 To doom a soul to hell’s eternal shade,
 For breaking laws the Infinite has made.

“Think of the villain, who, for sordid gain,
 His unsuspecting victim basely slew,
 And, in the very act, himself was slain,
 His hand all reeking with the blood he drew.
 Did he survive the crime, the brand of Cain
 Would, on his guilty brow, itself renew,
 And, justly, you would say that he should die,
 And ‘blood for blood!’ would be the thrilling cry.

“Then — dying while he did the dev’lish deed,
 With murder in his heart, blood on his hand —
 Can you believe a just God has decreed
 That his unshriven, crime-stained soul shall stand,

Unwhipt of justice, with the soul whose meed
Is to receive with gladness the command:
‘Thou good and faithful servant, enter thou
Where sorrow nevermore can cloud thy brow’?

“The lunatic and wretched imbecile,
Alone, you hold incapable to do
An act of crime, because devoid of will.
Conversely, then, it certainly is true
That ev’ry one who knoweth good from ill
Should suffer, if he evil ways pursue,
And sane men, to escape the wholesome rule,
Have pleaded lunacy, or played the fool.

“Such pleas, sometimes, succeed, on slightest ground;
A murderer, of shrewd and ample mind,
When called to answer to indictment found,
Pursued a most peculiar course, designed
To prove himself insane; and it was crowned
With all success. The verdict read: ‘We find—
Because he’s crazy at the present time—
The pris’ner should not now be tried for crime.’

“He had his lawyers told they must secure
 A panel of the best, plain, workingmen,
 Of good, hard, common-sense, they could procure.
 In vain, they spoke against the plan, and, when
 They yielded, thought an adverse verdict sure.
 He calmly listened to their views, and then
 He said: ‘You just comply with my request,
 And I will undertake to do the rest.’

“His counselors, until that day, had thought
 His case was hopeless, any way ’twas viewed;
 But, when the pris’ner into court was brought,
 Appearing just like any simple dude—
 So great the change that in his looks was wrought,
 In dress and style, and ev’ry attitude—
 The lawyers understood, at once, his plan,
 And saw the wondrous shrewdness of the man.

“The words of witnesses all went to show
 He was entirely sane, and not one who
 Had heard—except his lawyers—seemed to know
 The cause to which the verdict strange was due,

Until a juror said: 'His hair did grow,
'Twas proved, as most of other people's grew,
But, now, he parts it squarely in the middle' —
And thus was solved what seemed to be a riddle.

"Another juror, in explaining, said:

'We thought a man who wears his hair that way
Must certainly be very light of head,
And, if a hair or two should chance to stray
Across the proper parting, we were led
To think he'd lose his balance any day,
And so the jury was constrained to find
That such a one was surely out of mind.'

"Now, all of you, of course, are well aware

That not infallible is such a test;
For many great men thus have done their hair,
And, others, not with greatness much opprest,
Have followed their example, here and there,
Who, still, with intellect enough are blest;
But, on the 'insane' plea, some men, perchance,
Would view the habit as a circumstance.

“Such pleas and plays your earthly courts have passed
Upon, and been egregiously deceived;
But, there will be a great High Court, at last,
Whose Judge hath oft forgiven, oft reprieved,
And all who come before Him, unrelieved,
By pardon, thro’ repentance, will be cast
A place of fearful punishment within —
For God and man, alike, will punish sin.

“FOURTHLY.

“You mortals should, most surely, happy be,
Because you have a world so beautiful,
And have your wills — so very unlike me —
To simply unto God be dutiful,
The glory of your loving Lord to see.
To me, indeed, it is inscrutable,
That you to whom such ample guides are given,
Should not secure your entrance into heaven.

“With Moses, and the prophets, miracles,
And nature’s voice and ever lovely face,
And revelation, which most surely tells
The way in which to win the tender grace

Of Him who went before, and ever dwells
In heaven, to prepare for you a place,
Not even one of you need fail to find
The home for all the pure in heart designed.

“You, also, have the unseen graces, three,
To be with you thro’ all your earthly way—
Bright Hope, sweet Faith, and gentle Charity—
Who, once, in Eden fair, were wont to stray,
In form perceptible, sent down to be
Man’s comforter, until the hapless day
When he was driven forth, with bitter tears,
To walk the earth through all his weary years.

“Hope, with her laughing lip and beaming eyes,
Walked by his side to cheer him with her song,
And Faith to point him ever to the skies,
And bid him trust in God and do no wrong,
And gentle Charity, whose love for man ne’er dies,
With sweet blue eyes and golden tresses long,
Was there to minister to him, and she
Is, justly, called the greatest of the three.

“Since man went forth from Eden’s bowers,
 These three, unseen, are with him, ev’rywhere;
 Tho’ Hope deserts him, oft, in darkest hours,
 And Faith, grown cold, may leave him in despair,
 Still, Charity, forever true, would scatter flowers
 Along his way, and, when he dies, is there,
 To weep, alone, perhaps, where all is gloom,
 And spread her snowy mantle o’er his tomb.

“Ah, if sweet Charity could have a place
 In ev’ry heart, how often you would see
 A gladsome smile upon a happy face,
 Where, now, a shadow dark may only be!
 How oft the tears which, now, each other chase
 Adown the pallid cheek of misery,
 Would, then, by loving hand be wiped away,
 And sorrow’s night give place to joyous day!

“Some fain would think the Bible is not true;
 Yet it were better, far, all other books
 Were blotted out, and ever lost to view,
 Than that this fountain, whence so many brooks

Go forth, all bearing sweet refreshment to
The thirsting world, which to it looks
For consolation true, should poisoned be
By deadly breath of infidelity.

“It is the fountain-source of all the laws,
By wisest statesmen, for your guidance, made;
The sage from it a wealth of wisdom draws,
And stern philosophy by it has stayed,
To gather jewels, free from spot, or flaws,
And to its side the poet oft has strayed,
In the pure fount his fevered brow to lave,
And catch a sparkle from each shining wave.

“And were the Bible false, I do believe
’Twere less a crime a christian’s life to take,
Than him of his consoling faith bereave,
And, thus, the hopes that cheer his heart to break;
’Twere better him, forever, to deceive,
In this, than his confiding trust to shake;
For his belief contains for him a charm,
And such deception could not do him harm.

“Were I convinced there is no future life,
And that the Bible is the work of men,
Alone, and is with false assertion rife,
And, yet, desired to serve mankind, it then,
I do declare, would be my earnest strife
To teach you to believe it; for pen,
Nor tongue, can ever tell the good for you
It does, in but a worldly point of view.

“But you would better never have a doubt
As to its truth; for I can well assure
You that 'tis true, as you will all find out,
One day, when you will recognize its pure
And sacred teachings, warning you about
The future, which you, somewhere, must endure,
And I can say, and not the least dissemble,
That devils, even, do believe and tremble.

“You erring mortals suffer much distress,
Which you bring on yourselves, your follies through;
You would a paradise, on earth, possess,
If unto others you would only do—

As your good Bible doth on you impress—

Just as you would that men should do to you;
Yet, how a man will sometimes hate another —
A brother, even, striking down a brother!

“The eagle, soaring to the summer sky,

Looks down upon the serpent, far below —
With poisoned fang and burning, baleful eye —
And knows the creeping thing its mortal foe;
And he who reaches a position high,
The hatred of the small in soul will know;
And some who to such place have found access,
Would rivals, real, or supposed, repress.

“Officials, with the baser politicians,

When Jesus Christ proclaimed Himself a King —
Altho’ He did to men, in all conditions,
The kindest deeds—at once conspired to bring
About His death, and, from their high positions,
Urged on a reckless, rabble following,
The Son of God and Friend of Man to slay,
And put a fancied rival out of way.

“’Tis said that He was never known to smile —
 An ever sad and gentle being, who,
 From sin’s dark way and sorrow, would beguile
 The hapless sons of men, and lead them to
 A better world than this; and even while
 Upon the Cross, ‘They know not what they do!’
 Exclaimed, and asked forgiveness, then,
 For those misguided, cruel, sinful men.

“No wonder that the very rocks were riven —
 No wonder that the sky grew black as night,
 For there had been a rain of tears in heaven,
 If angels could have looked upon the sight,
 When He, the Friend of Man, to death was given!
 The old earth shook, as if with mortal fright,
 And hell, itself, in wonder, stood aghast,
 To see, by men, all other crimes surpassed!

“You all have heard how, by the cruel Cain,
 His favored brother, at the altar, was,
 In envy and in jealous anger, slain;
 Well, since that time, without another cause,

Save envy, or some selfish end to gain —

Defying all divine and human laws —
Have wicked men been willing to employ
The foulest means a rival to destroy.

“I do not mean to intimate that all

Your office-holders, and those who mix
In state affairs, are base; for, at the call
Of countrymen, some enter politics,
With motives pure and high, and never fall
Into the wicked and ignoble tricks
Of those who risk exposure and disgrace —
Content, by any means, to win a place.

“There be full many great and noble men,

Who love the people and their country well,
And, alway, serve them with devotion, when
To office called; I do not need to tell
You some attain the place they seek, and, then
Their country and their friends, for gain, would sell,
And if the Saviour came again this way,
For less than Judas did, would Him betray.

“You hear the demagogue, in accents loud,
 Tell of the many good things he has done,
 Or will do, if elected, and the crowd,
 With voice and vote, to his support may run;
 No Judas, he, and he'll be very proud
 To serve them well, when he the goal has won (?)
 Yet, if he had one-half Iscariot's pride,
 He'd serve his country best by suicide.

“Such rise to place by means they dare not tell,
 And knaves, and fools, and sycophants, applaud—
 Yet, not a baser thing, in earth or hell,
 There is, than one who wins by cheat, or fraud!
 Tho' ev'ry breeze may with his praises swell,
 And vice and ignorance may loudly laud,
 Yet honest men the creatures must despise,
 Who gain their ends by bribes, or tricks, or lies.

“Remember, tho', that good men often are
 Accused of wicked things they never thought
 Of doing; things that should forever bar,
 If they were true, from all positions sought;

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These accusations, false, will sometimes mar
A good man's fame, although they may be brought,
With only selfish aim and motive base,
By rival candidate, in search of place.

“FINALLY.

“Perhaps, I have not uttered any thought
That is original. 'Twas my design
To call attention to a theme which ought
To interest you all. By word Divine,
Existence of the hell is surely taught,
And, to such teaching, add I word of mine;
For there, as ruler o'er the place, I bide,
And speak of it with all a monarch's pride.

“But I must bring my talking to a close,
With, thus far, nothing much myself to please,
Except that I may readily suppose
That I have had, on ev'ry one of these,
A very sweet revenge, since I arose,
For what I suffered, in such large degrees,
When I a too-long sermon listened to—
As, certainly, has been the case with you.

“Let each of you who joined the church because
 You love the Lord, your God, hold up a hand.
 All hands are up, I see; and now, I pause
 To ask that ev’ry one of you will stand,
 Whom fear of Satan either drives, or draws,
 Into the fold. None, now, are standing, and
 You, thus, profess, with beautiful accord,
 That none fear me, but all adore the Lord!

“I noticed quite a number go away,
 Soon after I my crude remarks began,
 And knew, full well, that they declined to stay
 Because each is an earnest christian,
 And, not at all, did fancy my rough way
 Of introduction; and it was my plan
 To cause all such as they, at once, to leave;
 But, such you claim to be, I now perceive.

“Let all stand up, who would not Satan fear,
 If he, in his most frightful shape, should come,
 And in your presence, now, unmasked, appear.
 You all are standing, I believe; tho’ some

Do not stand straight enough to make it clear
That they would not prefer he'd stay at home.
'Twould, doubtless, be amusing, if I tried
To see how many, by their acts, have lied."

Then, with a wicked twinkle in his eye,
He suddenly turned off the brilliant gas,
And all was darkness, till a minute by
Had been allowed, in silence deep, to pass,
Then turned it on again, and I would try,
In vain, what followed, to depict. Alas!
Was gone the speaker's handsome form and face,
And Satan, in dread shape, stood in his place!

His big, black horns appeared, in bold display,
His cloven feet were plainly to be seen,
A stream of smoke came from his mouth away,
His eyes were living coals of glowing green;
He looked like some ferocious beast of prey —
A horrid monster of most frightful mien —
With stentor voice, of deepest thunder sound,
And with a tail that dragged upon the ground!

At once, a panic struck the startled crowd,
 And, to escape, they made a rapid rush,
 With fearful shrieks, and groans, and wailing loud,
 Upon the weaker trampling, in the crush —
 The boldest of them, now, completely cowed —
 And, when there came of clamor wild a hush,
 It seemed as if they all had run away,
 Save six, who, fainting, all unconscious lay.

“I thought it would be thus,” Old Satan said;
 “But half-a-dozen of them here remain,
 And they are stricken down, with awful dread,
 And look as if they did no life retain.
 It might not thus have been, if they had read,
 With faith, their Bibles, where, in language plain,
 They would have found the declaration true:
 ‘Resist the Devil and he’ll flee from you.’

“How many people do not know their hearts,
 Who join the ranks, as soldiers of the Cross!
 One says: ‘Enlisted for the war!’ and starts
 All right; but from the ranks you note his loss,

When, some fine day, he stealthily departs,
To forage on forbidden grounds, or toss
His arms aside, in sport, or basely fly,
When he suspects some real danger nigh.

“I took what some believe is my true form,
And, otherwise, I would have spoiled my plan,
For none of them had showed the least alarm,
While I retained the semblance of a man;
And I, perhaps, would have received a storm
Of invitations from the ones who can,
In handsome preachers, something always see,
That calls for proffered hospitality.”

Just then, from out a deeply shaded place,
He heard a voice that softly rose in song,
And, turning, saw a form of youthful grace,
He had not seen before amid the throng—
A gentle girl, whose fair, expressive face
Unto the brightest seraph might belong—
And even he, awhile, enraptured, hung
Upon her words, as thus she sweetly sung:

“O, Saviour, loving Son of God,
Who for my sake the wine-press trod,
And wept in sad Gethsemane,
I trust in Thee! I trust in Thee!

“O, Thou, who, to the waiting world,
The Banner of the Cross unfurled,
And died a cruel death for me,
I trust in Thee! I trust in Thee!

“Thou guardest me in pleasure’s hour,
And when the clouds of sorrow lower,
Thy smile, thro’ all, by faith, I see,
And trust in Thee! and trust in Thee!

“O, loving Lord, when Thou art near,
Not Satan’s power do I fear,
For, with Thine arm encircling me,
I trust in Thee! I trust in Thee!”

The singing ceased, and Satan, who had been
So bold before, appeared uneasy now;
For he could read a strong reproof of sin,
In her pure eye and on her stainless brow.
He said: "Not Satan's wiles could ever win
A soul so true to break a plighted vow.
Whenever one like this I chance to meet,
I, from such holy presence, must retreat.

"Not since," he said, "I down to hell was driven,
Hath fairer form than hers to me appeared;
I've listened to the angels sing in heaven,
Yet, not, up there, a sweeter voice I heard.
'Tis strange that unto one so frail is given
A power which, by even me, is feared.
Before me strongest men may faint or fly,
But faith like hers can hell itself defy!

"My presence does not this young girl abash,
Altho' her years scarce more than childhood's are;
But here lies one, who, with his fierce moustache,
And burly frame, looked like a bold hussar!

Tho' he, in time of peace, might 'cut a dash,'

He would a coward prove, in time of war;
For if confronted with a hostile gun,
I know that he would either faint or run.

"The Devil hates all cowards, and his fire

Is kept, for their base souls, intensely hot,
But e'en the very Devil must admire

The brave, true, earnest christian, who is not
Afraid to do what duty may require,

No matter where, on earth, be cast his lot!
But I have seen enough of earthly things to-day,
And toward my home I now will take my way.

"To do an act of good, the Devil scorns,

And yet, — tho' such was never my desire —
Perhaps, in some base hearts I've planted thorns,

To prick them on to aspirations higher."

He gazed a moment 'round, took in his horns,

Dashed from each eye a blazing ball of fire,
And, stooping down — without another word —
Tucked up his ugly tail and disappeared.

But, perhaps, we would better no longer pursue
The Devil, his devious wanderings thro',
For, from what we have heard, we believe it is true
That 'tis the most dangerous thing we can do;
So, now, we will bid the old villain adieu,
And hope his acquaintance to never renew,
Lest, following him just a little too far,
He lead us along thro' his big gates ajar,
And close them behind us, our egress to bar.

FOUND IN THE STREET.

The gloom of the night o'er the city hung low,
A curtain of black between earth and the sky,
The wings of the tempest were white with the snow,
As winter's chill breezes went hurrying by.

A maiden, secure from the storm and the cold,
In mansion of splendor that stood by the way,
Sat combing the beautiful tresses of gold,
Which over her form were permitted to stray.

Beside her were flowers, all bright in their bloom,
As if the soft summer were lingering there,
While, seemingly, dizzy with drinking perfume,
A mocking-bird warbled a wild, -changeful air.

The firelight glowed on the picture-hung wall,
And comfort and luxury seemed to combine,
Throughout the apartment, to render it all
That taste could suggest and that art could design.

Abruptly the bird brought its song to a close,
To listen to one that was sweeter by far,
As softly a hymn of devotion arose,
From the lips of the girl, as she touched her guitar.

She hushed her sweet song, and arose, with a sigh —
Her hair, unconfined, floating over her form —
And, crossing the chamber, the window stood by,
And shuddered to hear the deep voice of the storm.

“As frail as the thin pane of glass that to-night
Protects me,” she said, “from the tempest out there,
The barrier is between darkness and light —
As narrow the line between hope and despair!

“Too often they heed not humanity’s calls,
Who, favored of fortune, from want are secure,
Tho’ shadows, that come from their towering walls,
Make colder the highways where wander the poor.

“O, Father in heaven — O, merciful God —
Who rulest the winds and the waves, in their might,
I pray Thee to send all Thine angels abroad,
To watch o’er the poor on this terrible night!

She lifted the curtain, and folded it back,

The light from the window streamed over the way,
And, there, by the side of the snow-covered track,

She saw a dark shape on the cold ground that lay.

A watchman was passing, and saw the light fall

With flickering glow, on a pale, girlish face,
And gave a quick signal assistance to call,

To bear her away to some sheltering place.

The girl, from the window, still silently gazed

Upon the white face of the seemingly dead,
Till help had arrived, and the form had been raised,
Then, out of her chamber, she hurriedly fled

Adown the long hallway, and opened the door,

And called to the bearers to bring her within;
They paused, for they thought that the burden they
bore

Was only, perhaps, a frail daughter of sin.

“I ask not,” she said, “if she sinned, or did not;

The dead and the dying our charity claim;
Whatever she once was, let all be forgot —

We care for her, now, in humanity’s name!”

She touched, with her jeweled and delicate hand,
The brow which no gem, perhaps, ever had worn,
And then, at a gesture that seemed a command,
Up into the mansion the stranger was borne.

A piece of embroidery, skillfully wrought,
But stained with the sorrowful tears she had shed,
With which, some rich patron that evening she sought,
Proclaimed her a slave of the needle and thread.

An hour she lay as if resting in death,
Then, slowly, she opened her large, languid eyes,
And, painfully gasping, a moment, for breath,
Gazed 'round on the scene, with a look of surprise.

The flowers breathed sweetly, the bird sang again,
The maiden stood by, in her garments of white,
And seemed, to the sufferer's wandering brain,
As one of the sunny-haired angels of light.

"This is heaven," she murmured, "the song of the bird,
The fragrance of flowers that never will fade,
Of which, from the lips of my mother, I heard,
As gently her hand on my young head was laid.

“I heeded her counsel, and trusted in God,
Tho’ sin and temptation around me were rife;
Tho’ lonely and dark was the pathway I trod,
No breath of dishonor has sullied my life.

“When dying, she said we would meet in this home —
The place by the Saviour prepared for the blest;
Go tell her, sweet angel, her loved one has come,
And here, till she cometh to greet me, I’ll rest.”

As if she were weary, her eyelids she closed,
And, never again, will she waken to weep,
For, tho’, like a slumbering child, she reposed,
In death’s cold embrace she had fallen asleep.

Gone! and the tale of her life is untold;
Dead! and no name to the watcher she gave;
Gone! and the hand of the stranger must fold,
Around her frail body, the robes of the grave.

All thro’ the long night, till the dawning of morn,
Like an angel of charity, tender and sweet,
The delicate girl, unto luxury born,
Watched over the form of the waif from the street.

One bowed her fair head, with a sorrowful mien;
The spirit of one from all sorrow had fled;
A tear on the cheek of the living was seen;
A smile seemed to rest on the face of the dead.

Now, out in the churchyard, a little white stone
Is placed, where the graves of the friendless are made,
With only the simple inscription, "Unknown",
To mark where the form of the stranger is laid.

Poor child of misfortune, her faith was not vain,
Who trusted in God, through temptation and strife,
And, though 'tis not found in the records of men,
Her name will appear in the great Book of Life!

And, as she shall happily wander up there,
Where sorrow and want can assail her no more,
Another, sometime, with the long, golden hair,
Will walk, by her side, on the "Beautiful Shore."

DAY-DREAMS.

Like some lone maiden, clad in garments gray,
Whose cheek and brow are pale, as if with pain,
Who wanders, listlessly, upon her way,
With languid footstep and with troubled brain,
The twilight hour, between the night and day,
Now walks abroad upon the earth again,
And, as I watch the dying day depart,
The gloom of night seems gath'ring 'round my heart.

How many hours we let go by in dreaming!
Perhaps, too much of life we thus have spent;
Yet, it may be, these reveries, so teeming
With mem'ries of the past, or all intent
Upon the future, which an idle seeming,
Or listlessness, unto some lives have lent,
Would not, perhaps, be altogether vain,
If they were linked in one connected chain.

The mists which hang around the mountain's brow,
Compressed, condensed, may form the pearly dew,
'Neath which the flowers ever love to bow,
And out of which the stately pine tree drew
The fresh, green glow that it is wearing now,
And creeping tendril may its strength renew;
From floating vapors of the night and morn,
New beauties on the cold, dark earth are born.

And waking dreams are but the mists of mind,
The shadows, as it were, of wand'ring thought,
In which we may some hidden treasure find,
When we, with careful effort shall have wrought
Them into something of a form defined.
As dew from mists of morn and eve is brought,
To deck the flowers and the trees of spring,
So, we, from out our dreams, some good may bring.

Yet, while the hand of nature cannot choose
But hang the dewdrop on the noxious weeds,
As well as on the flower, or refuse
To cherish the dark Upas, which but breeds

Destruction, as it does the plants we use

To minister to pleasure, or to needs,
Man may direct his powers, if he will,
The good to foster and to check the ill.

He is not idle, alway, when his hand

Hangs unemployed beside him. There are those
Who, even while upon the way they stand,
And only seem to watch the crowd that goes,
Or walk the woods, alone, or on the strand,
Or where the flower in summer beauty grows,
Or mingle with the gay, yet ever find
Some food for thought, some labor for the mind.

Perhaps, the sweetest strains the minstrel sings,

From some far-distant day-dream softly flow;
Perhaps, from thence the poet often brings

The burning thoughts that on his pages glow,
And eloquence may but retouch the things

It mused upon a month or year ago;
Fair science, too, has gathered many a gleam
From the apparent idler's waking-dream.

'Tis true, we know, that these, our musing hours,
Are wholly wasted, if we do not catch
From them a passing thought, from which the powers
Of mind may shape some real good, or snatch,
Out of the ever-changing scene, some flowers,
Which we together haply may attach
To some word-painted picture, or entwine
Them in a wreath of good and fair design.

To man, the fleeting moments were not given
That he might any waste in aimless dreams,
But that they should bear fruit. The breeze of heaven,
That viewless rover, which forever streams
Along the way, from aching brows has driven
The fever's burning flush, and alway teems
With richest blessings, which, with nature's grand
Munificence, it spreads on ev'ry hand.

The tempest, even, tho' in fierce and wild
Career it rushes on, and in its path
Leaves desolated homes in ruins piled,
And houseless victims of the storm-king's wrath,

Who, but an hour before, in plenty smiled,
Yet, now, in grief are wrapt, because the scath
Of the destroyer's cold and cruel breath
Has fearful ruin wrought and scattered death,

May, yet, upon its troubled bosom, bear
Some little seed, it may be, of a flower,
To feed the flying tenants of the air,
Or lend new beauty to some lovely bower —
Or of a tree, to the lone desert, where,
Of its own kind, it may bring forth, to shower
Fair fruits upon the hungry passer-by,
Or cast a shade where weary limbs may lie.

And, thus, in all conditions of the mind,
Some good for us, or others, may be found.
If happy thoughts steal o'er us, as the wind,
With fragrance laden, murmurs softly 'round,
Or if, awhile, in boist'rous crowds, we find
Those fiercer joys, which often there abound,
We may, in either mood, a thought secure,
Which may to our, or other's, good inure.

And sorrow, too, tho' stealthily it creep

Upon us, till its deep'ning shades appall—

Or, on us, with a sudden blow may leap,

As hungry lions on their victims fall,

And, with relentless hand, may rudely sweep

The torn heart's trembling strings, until it, all

Enwrappt in grief, would break, or cease to feel,

A blessing, still, may in its clouds conceal.

And, in reflection's crucible, if we

Would labor only to refine and mold

Our thoughts and feelings, and if aught there be

Of good therein, extract it thence, and hold

It from the useless and the evil free—

As from the worthless sands the virgin gold

And rarest gems are gathered up—we might,

From darkness, even, bring some jewel bright.

Thou child of genius, within whose breast

A haunting demon ever seems to dwell—

A troubled, longing spirit of unrest,

Which over thee has cast its mystic spell—

Thou whom contentment never yet has blest —

Whose bosom, it would seem, must ever swell
With wild emotions, and whose heart
Appears a thing from common joys apart —

Thou, like a stranger, in a stranger land,

Dost wander, lonely, through the weary earth,
And 'mongst thy fellow men dost musing stand,

Nor seem to share, nor comprehend, their mirth,
As some fair flower, brought, by ruthless hand,

From softer clime that gave its beauty birth,
To colder regions, pale and drooping seems,
As if it of its native country dreams.

And yet, unto the chill, unfriendly air,

The fragrant flower gives its rich perfume;
And thus, altho' thy spirit, faint with care,

Feels as a stranger in this land of gloom,
With others thou thy better thoughts canst share —

Canst bid thy fancies some fair shape assume,
And give them winged words, or, from thy pen,
Canst send them forth unto thy fellow men.

Perhaps, some happy thought of thine will cheer
A weary toiler, at the close of day,
Or drive from sorrow's eye the burning tear,
Or chase a cloud from some dark brow away;
Some word of thine may fall on eager ear,
Or, from thy fancy's flash, some brilliant ray
May light upon a tired, slum'bring brain,
And rouse it into life and hope again.

What tho' thy couch be prest by aching head,
And thou may'st wish in happy dreams to die,
But to awaken, when the night has fled,
To meet the day's dark sorrows with a sigh—
What tho' no love its holy light may shed
Upon thy longing heart—what tho' thine eye
Is often dimmed with bitter tears of grief—
In idle dreams, 'tis vain to seek relief!

The Master said, "Go, in my vineyard work!"—
He calleth unto me and unto you.
In toil, however hard, there seems to lurk
A balm for bleeding hearts, and it is true

That he who will no duty try to shirk,
May, always, something useful find to do;
Tho' for its wounds earth has no perfect cure,
The heart, in toil, may some relief secure.

He sins not least, who, guilty of omission,
Neglecteth to obey the stern command;
No matter how obscure his low position,
The humblest laborer in all the land,
Performing, faithfully, his humble mission,
In God's pure eyes will more exalted stand
Than any child of genius ever stood,
Who did not use his gifts in doing good.

But there's a bitter lesson thou, full soon,
Wilt learn: it is that, in thine intercourse
With men, if thou dost find the much-sought boon
Of fame, or fortune, thou wilt feel the force
Of envy; as the dog doth "bay the moon"—
Of light that shines in darkness the high source—
So, if thou risest o'er thy fellow men,
There will be some to hound and hate thee then.

Vituperation in thy way will stand,

And malice strive to crush thy very heart;

Anger will flash at thee its flaming brand,

And slander strike thee with its poisoned dart;

Detraction will reach forth its ruthless hand,

To drag down and destroy, and thou wilt smart

Beneath the cruel stings of jealousy,

And wounds, from source, sometimes, unknown to thee!

'Tis true, the noble spirit ever scorns

Those who no good to others would allow,

Rejoicing when the hand of fame adorns,

With laurels, merited, the worthy brow;

But others would prepare the crown of thorns,

And smile beneath their blows to see thee bow,

And, with the rabble, "Crucify him!" cry,

And on the cross would gladly see thee die!

Yet, falter not, tho' others may defame,

And baser spirits 'gainst thee may conspire,

But let it, alway, be thine end and aim

To do whatever duty may require;

Forsake not principle for wealth, or name,
But to be useful be thy chief desire,
And thou wilt find a sense of duty done
Is sweeter, far, than fame or fortune won.

Be ever careful not, in any way,
To let thy gifts be used in doing harm.
Let not thy fancy, in its freest play,
Gloss over crime, or lend to guilt a charm;
Write not a line that could lead men astray,
Or which could modest purity alarm;
Let evil never once thy pen engage,
Nor thought indelicate deface thy page.

The deathless words that genius may inspire,
Upon the wings of time will onward flow—
Like quenchless sparks of an immortal fire—
To cheer, instruct, enlighten, as they go,
Alluring men to aspirations higher;
Or they, with beautiful, but baleful glow,
From duty's path and safety may decoy,
Bright hopes to blast and usefulness destroy.

O, there are words that fall upon the ear,
Soothing and soft as music's sweetest strain,
And there are words that bring the bitter tear,
And pierce, like burning arrows, thro' the brain;
That live in memory, a heart to cheer,
Or mar existence with unceasing pain,
And we should ne'er forget how small a thing
May lasting joy or endless sorrow bring.

The mighty estimate, we cannot make,
Of good or evil, that a word has done.
'Tis said a pebble, cast into the lake,
Will start a ripple that will wander on,
Until upon the distant shore it break;
And, thus, a single word, thrown out upon
The sea of thought, a wave of influence—
A gentle ripple, it may be—from thence

May start, which, widening, as it onward creeps
From heart to heart, from mind to eager mind,
Will gather strength, as ever on it sweeps,
Till, black with sin, it, at the last, will find

The burning shore whereon perdition keeps,
 'Tis said, its hopeless prisoners confined,
And 'midst the wailings, heard forevermore,
Its burden dark of gathered evil pour;

Or, rich with glorious results, it may,
 Unto the shining shore of heaven, bring
A wealth of precious treasures up, and lay
 Them at the Master's feet, while sweetly sing
The angels, who, in beautiful array,
 Surround the throne of the Eternal King;
The power of words and deeds, for woe, or weal,
The great hereafter, only, can reveal!

DE WATERMILYUN.

A “COLORED” VIEW.

I has hearn a heap ob talkin’ an’ a mity site ob ’spute,
All about de wegitubles, an’ de meny kin’s ob fruit,
An’ I ’spress my hones’ ’pinion—while I doan talk
’gin de res’—

When I say de watermilyun is ob all ob dem de bes’!

O, if I kud fin’ a country whar dey ripens ebry day,
I wud make a monst’ous effut fêr to git dar, right
away!

An’ if I kud hab my “druther”, when my las’ bref
shud be drawn,

I wud chuse dat lonesum seasin, when de watermil-
yun’s gone;

An’, when I is a-dyin’, I shall ax to be laid low,
Whar, each year, a watermilyun, jis above my mouf,
kin grow.

Sum folkses say dat apples is de mos' inticin' crap —
Dat hit wuz, wid dis, Ole Satan, fur de 'oman, bait
de trap;

But I'se 'flected an' I'se 'flected, an' I kinnot un-
derstan'

How hit wuz dat sich as apples kud a-brung de fall
ob man!

So I kinder splains hit dis way, dat dey ain't no-
body know'd

But, at fust, de watermilyun on a tree, like apples,
grow'd;

Dar was nuff, 'sides dis, fur humans, in dat Par-
adise retreat,

An' de Massa want de milyun fer de angel ban'
to eat;

An' when de 'oman stole 'em, an' de rine He chance
to foun',

Den He say de vine, like sarpints, mus' go crawlin'
on de groun'!

Yas, hit 'pears to stan' to reasin, an' is easy to
believe,

Dat hit wuz de watermilyun what attempted ole Miss
Eve;

But, aldo hit temp' de 'oman, I is berry sho, since den,
Hit is been a mity blessin' to de po', los' sons ob
men;

An' I allus wuk de harder, when I'se tendin' ob de
vine,

Kase I feel dat I am lab'rin' fer de good ob all
mankin'.

See, de milyun is so handy, fer a meal, er fer
desurt;

You doan hab to clamb to git 'em, ner to dig 'em
frum de dirt;

You doan eben hab to peel 'em, er to make 'em inter
pize,

But you jis kin bus' 'em open, an' de feas' is fo'
yo' eyes!

O, de 'simmon in de winter is a mighty temptin'
thing;

Sweet pertater, fried wid 'possum — hit is fitten fer
a king!

Still, I sez, as I wuz sayin' — while I doan talk 'gin
de res' —

Dat, ob all de wegitables, watermilyun is de bes';
But I'se gittin mity hongry, an' I kinnot say no mo'
On dis entertainin' subjec' — kase my mouf hit water so!

TO BE SEEN OF MEN.

A poor little girl, in a tattered gown,
Wand'ring alone through the crowded town,
All weary and worn, on the curb, sat down,
 By the side of the way, to rest;
The big tears stood in her eyes of brown,
 Her hand to her bosom was prest.

The night was approaching, and winter's chill blast,
Which fell on the face of the child, as it passed,
Congealing the tears that were falling fast,
 From the poor little maiden's eye,
The blinding snow on her pale cheek cast,
 Not heeding her plaintive cry.

Now, hurriedly passing along the street,
She catches the sound of approaching feet,
And wearily rises, as if to entreat
 Some aid from the passer-by,
But, slowly and sadly, resumes her seat,
 Repelled by the glance of his eye.

He saw the wild tempest resistlessly hurl
The gathering snowflakes, with many a whirl,
Upon the bare head, where each bright, shining curl
Was swept by the breath of the storm,
But what did he care for the poor little girl?
His raiment was ample and warm.

He went to a charity meeting, that night,
And spoke, to the listener's great delight,
Of how 'twas the duty of all to unite
The suffering poor to relieve—
And held up a check for a thousand, "at sight",
So all of the crowd could perceive.

He handed the check to the treasurer, when
The audience applauded, again and again—
But the angel who holds the recording pen,
Methinks, did this sentence record:
"He doeth his alms to be seen of men,
Their praise be his only reward!"

The papers, next morning, had much to say
Of how the good gentleman did display
His generous spirit, in giving away
 So much, to the poor man's cause;
He smiled, as he read his own praises, that day,
 And thought of the night's applause.

The very same papers went on to repeat
A story they'd heard, of how, out in the street,
A watchman, at dawning of morn, on his beat,
 A poor little child had found,
With naught but the snow for a winding-sheet,
 Frozen to death on the ground!

Ah! who can declare that, when God shall unfold
Eternity's records, He will not hold
Him guilty of murder, who seeks with his gold,
 In charity's name, to buy
The praises of men, while, out in the cold,
 He leaves a poor child to die!

INDEPENDENCE DAY.

[Composed for and recited at the celebration of the Centennial Fourth, July, 1876, at Boonville, Mo.]

The Goddess of Liberty, sent from above,
On mission of mercy, on errand of love,
Rejected of empire, discarded by throne,
Thro' kingdoms and monarchies wandered alone,
Till, taking her flight to a land o'er the sea,
She found there a people who sighed to be free.

She breathed on the hearts of our patriot sires,
And kindled within them those burning desires
Which ne'er would be quenched, nor would slumber
again,

Until the fair goddess triumphant would reign.
Sustaining the weak and inflaming the cold,
She strengthened the doubtful and cheered on the bold,
And, giving our banner the stripe and the star,
She bade them go forth in her service to war!

That banner, unfurled to the sun and the breeze,
As proudly it floats o'er the land and the seas—

The beautiful emblem of freedom and right —
To-day, we will hail with a shout of delight!
And let the grim cannon be brought forth, once more,
Not death from its red mouth, in anger, to pour,
But only to blend the deep tones of its voice
With shouts of the people who meet to rejoice
O'er this, the return of the glorious day,
On which, just a century now passed away,
Our patriot fathers proclaimed them prepared
To die, or sustain independence declared!

From England and Scotia and Erin so fair,
From Germany's shore, from the Alps, bold and bare,
From sunny Italia and beautiful France,
From Spain, whose fair daughters win hearts with a
 glance,
From regions of snow, and from tropical isle,
Where summer-time reigns with perpetual smile,
Our country's adopted, from all o'er the earth,
To-day will rejoice with her children by birth,
And though they oft dream of the fatherland yet,
Sometimes, it may be, with a sigh of regret,
Beneath our proud flag, to the breezes unfurled,
They'd stand for our country, against the wide world.

Though memory brings me, in dreadful review,
The armies of gray and the legions of blue,
The heroes who once met in hostile array,
Will mingle together, as brothers, to-day;
And, if the invader should come to our shore,
I know they would rush to the battle, once more,
Each veteran's heart to the whole country true,
Though one wore the gray and the other the blue!

Now, let the wild tones of the jubilant bells
Be mingled with music, as sweetly it swells,
And may the soft winds, as they wander afar,
Breathe gently, to-day, on each stripe and each star,
And bear the glad tidings all over our lands,
There is union of hearts, there is joining of hands,
In north and in south, in the west and the east,
Where gather the people—at church or at feast—
On Liberty's altar their garlands to cast,
And cover with roses the thorns of the past.

May Heaven protect, as in days that are gone,
The old Ship of State, riding gallantly on,
And be we united, whatever befall—
Our Country! Our Country! the watchword of all.

WAVES FOLLOW WAVES.

Waves follow waves, o'er the dark, blue sea,
Chasing each other eternally;
Daily and nightly, still onward they flow,
Sometimes, alas, with a burden of woe!
Sometimes, to strew on the glittering strand
Gems from the beautiful mermaid's hand.

Down by the seaside, a fair young girl
Paused, for a moment, to gather a pearl,
Then looked, with a smile, to the cloudless sky,
And said, with a bright look of hope in her eye:
“Thou givest me gems from thy treasure, oh, sea,
But bring back my lover in safety to me!”

The twilight came on and the breezes grew chill;
The maiden returned to the cot on the hill;
A fearful foreboding her spirit came o'er,
And then the bright gem she had found on the shore,
In fancy, seemed only a frozen tear,
As sadly she murmured, “Oh, would he were here!”

She wistfully gazed from the window, that night,
Where rolled the blue waves in the soft moonlight,
Till, weary with watching, she knelt by her bed,
And, rev'rently bowing her fair, young head,
She prayed to the Father who ruleth the deep,
Her loved one from sorrow and danger to keep.

Then lightly she slumbered and sweetly she dreamed
Of eyes that with love for her alway had beamed,
And smiles on the lip of the sleeper that played—
Like sunshine that down to the roses had strayed—
And the blush on her fair cheek a moment that 'burned,
Revealed that she dreamed of her lover returned.

But rudely was broken that dream of delight!
The storm-king had come, in the darkness of night!
Aroused by the thunderbolt's terrible crash,
She saw the fierce lightning, as flash after flash
Came, luridly bright, through the fast falling rain,
And thought of her lover, far out on the main.

Arising, again to the window she went,
And, once, when the lightning the darkness had rent,
She looked where the roar of the billows was heard,
And there, like a weary and storm-driven bird,
She saw, in the glance that she hurriedly gave,
A bark, all dismantled, borne on by the wave.

She turned from the scene, with a sorrowful moan,
Then, silently, out in the night, all alone,
Not heeding the tempest and darkness, she sped
Adown the rough way, to the seaside that led,
Nor paused till she knelt by the surf-beaten shore,
And mingled her cries with the tempest's wild roar.

At dawn of the day, on the damp, chilly ground,
Together two youthful forms were found—
One, a beautiful girl, with her fair head at rest,
In a tangle of curls, on her lover's broad breast;
The other, a figure of manly mold—
And beauty and manhood, in death, were cold!

Like a lover who seeks with a gift to beguile,
The billow, one day, had approached with a smile,
Bringing bright gems to the beautiful maid;
Again, like a heart-stricken lover, betrayed,
In anger it came, with the tempest's rude breath,
Bringing her sorrow and bringing her death!

Over the ocean of time, thus, the years
Follow each other, thro' joy and thro' fears,
Bringing, one day, it may be, as they roll,
The bright pearl of pleasure to gladden the soul,
Next moment, the voice of enjoyment to hush,
A hope to destroy and a heart to crush!

IN HEAVEN AND EARTH.

Once, an angel, up in heaven, who on earth had
never been,
Asked for leave to make a visit to this world of
care and sin.
“Go,” replied the smiling Master, “and of things
on earth that be,
Come and tell thy sister angels that which most
impresses thee.”

Then she spread her snowy pinions for her pilgrim-
age afar,
And, thro’ shining worlds around her, past the moon
and past the star,
Swift as sea-bird, home returning, swift as ray of
morning light,
Straight unto the land of mortals, took her solitary
flight.

Then, unseen of men, she wandered thro' the tribes
of ev'ry name,

Finding little to remind her of the place from whence
she came.

In a strange land, she a stranger, with our human
woe or weal,

With our joys, or with our sorrows, naught of
sympathy could feel.

Tho' she looked on smiling faces, she could never
comprehend

How a being could be happy, in a world where all
things end;

And, to her, the falling tear-drop all unmeaning did
appear,

For, within the shining heavens, she had never seen
a tear.

Understanding nothing rightly that she saw upon the
earth,

All things, to her eyes celestial, seemed to be of
little worth.

Growing weary, she determined to return unto her
home,

From its bright and happy borders, never, never
more to roam.

And, at even, as the twilight fled before the coming
night,

Started upward on her journey, but had scarce begun
her flight,

When, as if she were enchanted, paused she, on
extended wing,

As a maiden, from her bower, a sweet song com-
menced to sing.

Not the maiden's beauty charmed her—not the glory
of her eye—

She had seen unfading beauty, in her home beyond
the sky;

Not the voice—tho' sweet as any that from mortal
lips e'er fell—

Not the singing of the maiden bound the angel with
its spell;

She had heard the seraphs singing, 'round the
Father's throne, above,

But, in wonder, now, she listened, for the maiden
sung of love.

Not the love that angels cherish, in which all, alike,
must share,

But the wild, absorbing passion mortals, one for one,
may bear.

Sorrow lurks and pleasure sparkles in the red waves
of the wine,

And in human love are mingled deepest grief and
joys divine,

Yet, the flowing wine-cup, madly, to its very dregs
we drain,

Tho' we know its fleeting rapture leaves us but
regret and pain.

And our wayward hearts, forever, from the fount of
love will drink,

For we would, than miss its sweetness, rather perish
on the brink.

And the angel heard the maiden, as she sung, still
sadly sigh,

Saw the smile her red lip wreathing, tho' the tear
was in her eye.

Much, at this, the angel marveled, thinking love
meant only bliss,

And she did not know the meaning of a passion
such as this.

Yet, there is so much of heaven in this earthly love
of ours,

'Tis no wonder that a wand'rer, coming from celestial
bowers,

Should discover, in the spirit of the softly murmured
song,

Something which she knew could never all unto the
earth belong.

Sung the maiden of her lover, and the angel, drawing
near,

Stood unseen, beside the singer, as if ev'ry word to
hear.

Naught of earth had her attracted, till she heard the
 story old,
Which we mortals, thro' the ages, to each other,
 still have told.
Like the last sigh of the zephyr, at the close of
 summer day,
Sunk that sweet song into silence, and the angel
 went her way.

When her sisters smiled her welcome to her home,
 and bade her tell
Of the things which most impressed her, in the land
 where mortals dwell,
She, awhile, in dreamy silence, sat, and then, the
 song she heard
From the red lips of the maiden, sung she softly,
 word for word.

Tho' they knew not all its meaning, there was some-
 thing in it, still,
Which, with strangely sweet emotions, seemed their
 angel hearts to thrill.

O, the love of erring mortals, tho' their idols be of
earth,

Like the sunshine on the flowers, up in heaven had
its birth!

And the song was not forbidden, for the Master, by
her side,

Stood, amid the throng around her, and the singer
did not chide;

But a bright, new harp He gave her, which, since
then, hath often rung,

As, unto her sister angels, she that song hath
sweetly sung.

THE GOLDEN OAR.

We have often been told, both in prose and in rhyme,
How best to succeed on the voyage of time,
And some one has said that the course to pursue,
Is always to "paddle your own canoe;"
But if o'er the dark sea of life you would ride,
With friends to assist you on every side,
And meet with a welcome on every shore,
You must paddle your boat with a golden oar.

If, desirous of sharing the honors of life,
You launch on the sea of political strife,
Though wanting in honesty, wanting in brain,
You still may be able your object to gain;
For you'll easily find an experienced crew,
To "manage the ropes" and to "fire up," too;
That will stand by you still, though the tempest may
 roar,
If you paddle your boat with a golden oar.

In affairs of the heart, if you wish to succeed,
And happily over love's waters to speed,
You would better launch out, like the fair queen of old,
With a glittering oar and the glimmer of gold;
For, often, when merit has striven, in vain,
Within the heart's harbor admittance to gain,
The way is found open, though never before,
When approached by the boat with a golden oar.

It was, doubtless, some sinner who uttered the thought,
At which many "worldlings" have eagerly caught,
But 'tis hinted that even in church it is true,
That the rig of your craft will pass under review;
And that, tho' much esteemed for your virtues you be,
And you let your light shine so that others may see,
Yet some of the "brethren" will love you the more,
If you paddle your boat with a golden oar.

O, the power of gold is a wonderful power,
In church and in state and in love's fairy bower!
For those who forsake you in time of your need,
And the cry of your sorrowing heart do not heed,

Who give you no aid in the day of distress,
Will greet you with smiles in the hour of success,
And will servilely come at your call, by the score,
When you paddle your boat with a golden oar.

Yet, trust not too much to the power of gold,
And let not your heart to its bondage be sold;
But, wherever, on life's troubled ocean, you dwell,
To your compass and chart you would better look well,
Lest from the right course you should wander away,
And while from the true line of duty astray,
You may land on a hopeless eternity's shore —
Though you paddle your boat with a golden oar!

THE FUTURE.

If we, in life's early morning,
Through the coming years could see —
Could we read, with eye prophetic,
What our destiny would be —
Some, perhaps, with eager footsteps,
Would press on, with hopes elate,
While, alas! with fear and trembling,
Many would behold their fate.

Some would see a flow'ry pathway,
Through which they will softly tread,
While the star of happy fortune
Over them its light will shed;
Some would see a gloomy valley,
Through which they must sadly go,
Where dark sorrow flings its shadow,
And the tearful fountains flow.

Some would see where they will gather
 Golden fruits, from bending boughs,
And the hand of friendship bringing
 Fairest garlands for their brows;
Some would see but faded flowers,
 Strewn along the path of life,
Jewels crushed and idols broken,
 Love and friendship lost in strife.

O, 'tis well for us the future
 Is concealed from mortal view,
And that hope, still softly singing,
 Leads us all our journey through;
Well for us the veil that hideth
 Coming sorrows may not fall,
Lest the startling revelation
 Should the stoutest heart appall!

BEAUTY'S TEARS.

I dreamed, one night, I saw a sweet, young friend,
Whose features I have thought so strangely fair,
That e'en creative power could not lend
Another charm to those that linger there.

I think some hearts on earth are free from guile;
If so, then such is hers, I do believe,
And yet, I dreamed the maiden wept, the while,
As if she did o'er some great sorrow grieve.

Close by her side, an angel stood, I thought,
With form and face almost as fair as hers,
Who, in a golden chalice, richly wrought,
Received the maiden's swiftly-flowing tears.

I gazed, in wonder, at the scene, and said:
"Are none on earth from sorrow's touch secure?
And thou, bright being, what could thee have led
To this dark world, where hearts such woes endure?"

The angel saw my look of wonder, heard
My question, and replied, in accents low:
“Mortal, when first on earth dark sin appeared,
The fount of human tears began to flow.

“God’s ways, not you nor I can understand,
For e’en the pure in heart sometimes despair,
Nor beauty’s charm, nor love’s most tender hand,
Can shield from sorrow or exempt from care.

“If thou my mission to the earth wouldst know,
The Master unto me the task has given
To gather beauty’s tears, when thus they flow,
To hang, as dew, upon the flow’rs of heaven.”

OUR COUNTRY.

The stream that from the northern hill
 Into the valley brightly pours,
May ripple on, and on, until
 It reaches flow'ry southern shores.
The same wild birds that sweetly sing,
 Mid northern scenes, in summer-time,
When winter comes, their way will wing
 To some far-distant southern clime.

The same great sea whose voice awakes
 The echoes of New England's strand,
Rolls on afar until it breaks
 On Carolina's beach of sand.
The breeze that o'er the frozen peak
 Of northern land, at morning, roves,
At eve, may kiss the maiden's cheek,
 Who wanders thro' the orange groves.

Alike the mournful willows weep
 Their dewy tears, above the grave,

Where northern hero lies asleep,
And rests the gailant southern brave.
Alike the creeping tendrils twine—
Alike the flowers brightly bloom—
Alike the stars of evening shine,
On northern and on southern tomb.

Thus, nature doth the lesson teach
That God alike regards us all,
And that, impartially, on each,
His blessings He allows to fall;
And yet our passion-blinded eyes
Refuse the lesson taught, to read,
And oft we let dissensions rise,
With bitter word and wrongful deed.

May He, who, on the troubled deep,
Said to the tempest: "Peace, be still!"
When winds and waters fell asleep,
And surging seas obeyed His will,
Our country keep from cruel wars,
And love, akin to His, impart
To all beneath the Stripes and Stars,
And make us, ever, one in heart!

CONTRAST.

They stood together, side by side,
Beneath the cloudless, summer sky,
And watched the pale moon slowly glide,
Among the starry isles on high;
And moon and stars looked down, the while,
Upon those forms of wondrous grace,
As if they watched the happy smile
That rested on each lovely face.

For each is fair as flow'r that throws
Its fragrance to the breeze of May,
And yet, the lily and the rose
Are not so much unlike as they.
The one is like the morning bright,
With soft blue eyes and tresses fair,
The other like the queen of night,
With starry eyes and raven hair.

It is not strange that one like me,
Whose heart is thrilled by beauty's charms,
Should pause, enraptured, thus to see
Those faces fair, and lovely forms;
For if an angel passed that way,
Though sent on errand from the skies,
I'm sure it would have made delay,
To linger near those lips and eyes.

MUSIC.

Since music, through the vaulted heavens, rang,
When all the morning stars together sang,
Since Mother Eve, in Eden's garden, heard
The wild, sweet song of first-created bird,
In palace, cottage, court and camp and bower,
Hath man acknowledged music's magic power.
It lulls the head of infancy to rest,
And calms the storm in manhood's rugged breast;
It falleth sweetly on the lover's ear,
And dries, on beauty's cheek, the trembling tear;
'Tis sweet, alike, to desert's wand'ring child,
And him on whom the sun of art hath smiled.
To scenes of joy, new charms it doth impart,
And soothes the sorrows of the troubled heart;
It cheers the soldier, where the banners wave
And sadly wails above his honored grave.
When up to God, adoring voice we raise,
The sweetest worship is the song of praise.
And when the ties that bind the earth are riven,
Music will greet the ransomed soul, in heaven.





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